



Fig. 1. Greek descendant in Şirince, Turkey. Image by DIADRASIS.

WHISPERS OF A COMMON PAST: MAPPING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF THE 1923 GREEK AND TURKISH POPULATION EXCHANGE

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The main aim and theme of this article will be to illuminate the use of collective memory and intangible heritage of celebratory traditions within geographically and politically/religiously separated populations as a means of creating a common sense of belonging and shared identity. In addition, this article will emphasize the need to preserve, sustain, and transmit for future generations the rare and waning traditions that once were celebrated between now dispersed populations. Pulling excerpts from the Masters thesis "Whispers of a Common Past", this article will use the Greek and Turkish population exchange as a case study in order to analyse the effects of displacement on refugees and their descendants, and the possibility to revive shared traditions as a means of reconciliation.

Keywords:

Greece – Turkey – intangible heritage – Şirince – Smyrna

1. INTRODUCTION

The Great Pyramids of Giza, the Parthenon, the Colosseum, and the Tower of London all have something in common: they are tangible heritage. We can see them, feel them, perceive them, and scientifically test them. Though scholars have been fascinated by the tangible artifacts left behind by civilizations of the past, a contemporary understanding of heritage has emerged, questioning the fundamental existence of tangible heritage: Who left this heritage behind? Who were they? What were their lives like? These questions relate to the intangible heritage of a population—that which we are unable to tangibly perceive, but which holds equal importance in the understanding of our world's heritage.

The Whispers of a Common Past Tandem project between Diadrasis in Greece and the Selçuk Efes Collective Memory Center in Turkey is a study of intangible heritage shared between Greek and Turkish populations. As Greece and Turkey share a dark past, this project aims at using intangible heritage to create a brighter future. The coordinators from both organizations collected and conducted interviews with Asia Minor Greek and Muslim Greek refugee descendants to create, compare and analyse the intangible heritage shared between Greece and Turkey prior to the Turkish and Greek War of 1919-1922 and the subsequent compulsory population exchange of 1923. Using the information collected from this

analysis as well as excerpts from my Masters thesis on the subject submitted to the Brandenburg Technical University in Germany, the following article will discuss the common history and still celebrated traditions shared between the Greek and Turkish people today. The goal of this article is to begin a discourse between Greece and Turkey focusing more on their shared intangible heritage rather than on their most recent political disagreements. Furthermore, this project focuses on engaging younger generations with their rich heritage so that the intangible heritage discussed in this article can be preserved and transmitted to future generations.

2. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE RESEARCH METHODS

Despite the abundance of current academic literature documenting the history of Turkish and Greek relations (Bölükbaşı, 2004; Hirschon, 2003; Smith, 1973; Frangoudaki and Keyder, 2007; Kollias and Günlük-Şenesen, 2003; Doumanis, 2013), there has not yet been a thorough and unbiased analysis of contemporary relations based on the testimonies of refugee descendants exchanged from the Selçuk region in the 1920s. The methodology of this paper developed largely using previous methods of the social anthropological research and historical analysis set out by the authors listed above while employing new methods of gathering data.

Accounts of the historical events come from historical authors as well as accounts from refugees found in the archives of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies in Athens, a thesis by Thomais Hatzioannou on Şirince (Greek, Kirkintzes) refugees, personal interviews conducted in 2002 by President Dimitrios Krassopoulos of the Ephesus Centre (Panellinia Enosi Efesion» Πανελληνίας Ενωσης Εφρεσίων), a visit to the Museum of Asia Minor Hellenism Filio Chaidemenou, and interviews conducted by Diadrasis and the Selçuk Efes Collective Memory Centre with second generation residents of Şirince.

Once the historical background research was conducted, it was then important to analyse the conditions of the refugees after the population exchange. This analysis originates from reports conducted by the Refugee Settlement Committee as well as the personal testimonies and photographs of refugees themselves found in the sources listed above as well as from personal communications with refugee descendants. Then, in order to develop a basis of reliability for the traditions still practiced today, four media were utilised. First, the anthropological analysis of René Hirschon conducted in the 1970s and 1980s in the district of Kokkinia in Greece; second, the historical accounts and primary research documentation and analysis presented by Bruce Clark (2006) as well as Nicholas Doumanis (2013); third the primary evidence of refugee testimonials was gathered through interviews made in the 1960s found in the Ephesus Centre archives along with the 2002 interviews donated by the president, as well as from the refugee archives in the Centre for Asia Minor Studies in Athens; and fourth, personally conducted interviews in the present day with surviving refugees and refugee descendants in both Greece and Turkey.

In order to attain first-hand accounts of the historical events from people who can still recall them, Diadrasis and Selçuk Efes Collective Memory Center coordinators met in Izmir, Turkey to conduct interviews with villagers from the nearby village of Şirince (Greek: Kirkintzes). As most of the houses remain the same as they were when the Greeks had lived there and the families there are now the ones that descended from Muslim families expelled from Greece, the history is quite unique in a world where so much is torn down and lost forever. Intangible and tangible heritage always seem to be better conserved in poorer places because there is neither enough wealth to change the original fabric nor a lot of interaction with metropolitan lifestyles.

In order to properly record as many stories as possible, a list of questions was given to each interviewee regarding their family names, birth dates, and any memories they can recall regarding their previous living conditions or celebratory traditions. This research was aimed at finding overlapping stories and similarities between different testimonials. From the overlapping memories of traditions, a timeline and thereby method of mapping the traditions was developed, including the historical account of the tradition leading into whether the tradition was practiced after the exchange, and if so, if it is still practiced today.

3. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE PRESERVATION

The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage addresses the “deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003a). According to



Fig. 2. Map of the locations. Image by Google maps. Locations labeled by Katherine Burlingame

Fig. 3. Collecting oral testimonies. Image by DIADRASIS.



the Convention, intangible cultural heritage includes “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge skills, as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003a). Though many argue against the effectiveness of the Convention (Rudolff, 2006; Kurin, 2004), it still helps to raise some awareness of other previously ignored aspects of world heritage. Tracing common traditions between groups of peoples also helps to form common history and the development of a shared identity, which could be used as a mechanism to build bridges between two conflicting groups of peoples due to their politically forced displacement. In Greek and Turkish contemporary relations, for example, both countries blame each other for their tumultuous pasts and thereby subsequent written histories regarding the events that transpired contain nationalistic bias (Doumanis, 2013, p. 14) with little recognition of the common history and shared traditions. This article will therefore attempt to extend this concept of awakening the past and building bridges post-conflict by analyzing and preserving shared intangible heritage while maintaining sensitivity to political and terminological issues and presenting historical accounts and arguments from both sides.

4. GREEK AND TURKISH INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

Though now geographically dispersed between Turkey, Greece, and beyond, the previous communities of the Selçuk region of the former Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor (Turkey) once shared very similar traditions and celebrations over a thousand years. Despite sharing centuries of common heritage, “This... togetherness has not resulted in forging common experiences in positive terms. Its main product was deep feeling of mutual suspicion and mistrust. They are neighbours and allies, but perhaps ironically, they remain bitter adversaries” (Bölükbaşı, 2004, p. 1). This politically motivated upheaval and displacement of millions of people caused enormous loss of life and years of hardship for both sides, which has thereby caused an indefinable identity crisis in the descendants of these refugees as they slowly lose their heritage—forgetting they have more similarities than differences with their Byzantine and Ottoman ancestors and geographic roots. Since the Greek and Turkish cohabitation and coexistence was so long-lasting, it provides an excellent case study to analyze the consequences a population exchange can have on the people themselves. As Greece and Turkey remain somewhat notoriously bitter adversaries, the situation also provides a good example as to how intangible heritage can be used as a means of reconciliation between two conflicting groups of people post population-exchange.



Fig. 4. Şirince. Image by DIADRASIS.

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE BELLE ÉPOQUE

Although dominated by Ottoman authority after 1453, the Greek population of the Ottoman Empire in general enjoyed a thriving existence as wealthy merchants and traders. Since all Greek territories and Aegean islands were under Ottoman control, Greeks distributed themselves beyond their borders, safely and peacefully inhabiting Turkish coastal towns of the Aegean, Marmora, and Black seas and beyond. One of the most important cities in the Ottoman Empire was called Smyrna — predominantly wealthy due to the Greek and foreign presence there. As a coastal town of Anatolia, Smyrna played a central role in sea trade and boasted a flourishing harbour. The 400,000 person population shortly before the catastrophic events of the early 20th century consisted of 155,000 Greeks (40,000 Greek citizens and 115,000 subjects of Turkey), 165,000 Turks, 35,000 Jews, 25,000 Armenians, and 20,000 foreigners (10,000 Italians, 3,000 French, 2,000 English, 200 Americans, and the rest of other nationalities) (Bali, 2009: 15). Due to its multi-cultural nature, Smyrna was often considered to be the best combination of the east and west (Milton, 2008: 4). Especially in the 18th-19th century, Smyrna developed under British Mediterranean hegemony as well as through the construction of a railroad allowing the quicker exportation of more expensive goods (Bali, 2009: 15).

Although the Smyrnians lived contently under Ottoman rule, the rest of the Greek mainlanders did

not feel the same, and therefore fought for and won Greek independence in 1830 (Aldcroft, 2006: 144-146). Meanwhile, Ottoman and Turkish nationalism began to develop in the wake of the European enlightenment and the rise of the modern nation state (Özkirimli and Sofos, 2008). In general, however, the coastal cities of the Ottoman Empire were very cosmopolitan with enormous contact between various ethnic, religious, and cultural groups all living in relatively peaceful conditions. Though many residents were barely literate, most were bilingual in Turkish and Greek and were familiar with at least one other language. Carnival season included a large celebration with all occupants of the city (Kırlı, 2007: 224). Especially during festivals, there were often large interactions between groups with food exchanges, for example, during Ramazan (Ramadan) or Easter (Hirschon, 1989: 29). According to an interviewee born in 1923 in Kırkıntzes (Şirince), her family was well involved in carnival celebrations by making pitas, homemade pasta, and pumpkin pies while dressing in costume (Gavriel, 2002). In Doumanis' analysis of Muslim-Christian coexistence in the Ottoman Empire, he calls this period of intercommunality the belle époque as this time period had been a long-lasting peaceful era of joint recreational activities alongside even religious celebrations (Doumanis, 2013: 2).

In the rural villages in the hinterland of Smyrna, singing and dancing occupied the people on feast days, and in testimonials of residents from one of the villages called Kırkıntses (Şirince) it appears that the Greeks were friends with the nearby Muslims and would use

normal hospitality for any such visitors (Doumanis, 2013: 50). Especially during weddings and festivals, there was always singing and dancing and feasting with 'kindred solidarity'. Men were able to participate in other festivals from the Muslim religion, but they would not bring their wives. As Doumanis argues, based on oral testimonies, we know for certain that Muslims and non-Muslims did attend the same festivals (even religious festivals). While weddings were used for digging up old wounds and talking them out in order to strengthen relationships, feasts such as 'Ramazan Bayram' – the feast signaling the end of Ramadan – represented a place of gift-giving and sharing. According to Doumanis, interviewees said Romioi frequented this feast and they gave gifts usually in the form of prepared foods. Greeks would provide sweets after Ramadan usually in the form of red eggs at Easter and tsourekia (twisted sweet bread), and the Muslims graciously accepted them because they thought they brought good fortune and protection from evil powers (Doumanis, 2013: 74-76). Similarly, Greeks enjoyed *Şeker locum* (Turkish delight) sweets. Thus, food provided a commonality between two ethnically and religiously different populations.

In the research conducted by Diadrasis, we were able to undertake analyses on interviews with first generation refugees that have never before been published or reviewed. These interviews were conducted in 2002

by the now president of the Ephesus Centre (Panellinia Enosi Efesion» Πανελληνία Ένωσης Εφεσίων), Dimitria Krassopoulos, in Piraeus, Greece, and are accompanied with notes of the interviewees including their name, place of birth, and languages spoken. As the president is a second generation refugee himself, he conducted these interviews to connect himself to the social memory and hardships of his family's legacy.

The interviews provide significant insight into the relationship of Greeks and Turks before the conflict. Dimitria Gavriel (family name Hatzikonstantinou) born July 25, 1913, said her family had a good relationship with Turks and that she spoke Turkish in Kirkintses (Şirince) and Greek in Agiasolouk (Gavriel, 2002). Vasileia Lymperopoulou (family name Hatzikonstantinou), however, said she never met any Turks, and though she spoke Turkish and her grandfather spoke Greek, once she was in school she would be chased and punished for speaking Turkish by the *paidonomos*—those responsible for making children follow rules (Lymperopoulou, 2002). Similarly, Dimitria Kapsali, born in 1916 in Kirkintses (Şirince) also said she had lived far away from any Turks and that she had never seen a Turk in her life though she spoke Turkish and learned Greek after coming to Greece (Kapsali, 2002). Stamatia Karayianni, born in 1910, in Kirkintses said until 1908 there had been no problems with the Turks. Though some of her family had been called to serve in



Fig. 5. Smyrna in 1922.



Fig. 6. Interviews to Greek inhabitants of Şirince. Image by Dimitrios Krassopoulos, President, Ephesus Centre.

the army, they just had to pay a tax and did not have to go. However, in 1912 refugees started to come from Crete to Agiasolouk looking to build homes and this caused some stress between Greeks and Turks. Ms. Karayianni said she spoke Turkish in school, but then was also chased and punished by the paidonomos (Karayianni, 2002).

In Hirschon's (1989) research of refugees in Greece, she also noticed that whenever she talked with them about their neighbors in Turkey, there was always goodwill and harmony with little hatred or bitterness. Most said that they lived peacefully and that hostilities between communities had only started with the interference of the 'Great Powers' (οι Μεγάλες Δυνάμεις). Some even argued that it was the politicians that made them hate each other (Hirschon, 1989: 30). Therefore, how did these people become victims of a political struggle, and how did it develop into the catastrophic displacement of millions of people? More work must be done regarding this era and the relationships forged out of the coexistence of these peoples in the belle époque. As Doumanis argues, "To date, the only serious attention to these nostalgic traditions has come from outside the historic profession" (2013: 56).

4.2 THE ROOT OF THE CONFLICT

In the history of this region, what happens next is often a point of contention as the residents of the Ottoman Empire were thrown into the crossfire of the Balkan Wars, World War I, and most importantly, the political and economic pursuits of the Great Powers. As World War I came to a close, the Great Powers met at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to divide up the war-ravaged land. The Greek hero Eleftherios Venizelos managed to convince the leaders that Greece deserved ownership over Smyrna. This, however, led to an extensive Greek war effort to gain more territory and come face to face with the Turkish nationalist army led by Kemal Ataturk. In just a few years, Greece was turned around from its territory and all were forced out of Turkey except for a few residents of Istanbul and western Thrace (see Milton, 2008; Hirschon, 2003; Doumanis, 2013; Clark, 2006). The disaster of Smyrna and the subsequent population exchange left thousands dead and millions of others displaced and homeless with few possessions. Orthodox Greeks and Muslims of Greece were exchanged and told they could never return to their homelands.



Fig. 7. Smyrna fire with American flag. Image by Library of Congress Digital Archive, USA. 1922.



Fig. 8. Refugees just off the ship from Asia Minor to Salonica. Image by Library of Congress Digital Archive, USA. 1922.

Fig. 9. Tent village in the shadows of Temple of Theseus, Athens. Image by Library of Congress Digital Archive, USA, 1922.



5. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE ANALYSIS

Starting in 1925, Greece experienced a time called the 'Epic of Reconstructions', which included the development by the Refugee Settlement Committee (RSC) of Macedonia, Nea Sinassos, Nea Prokop, Nea Smirni, Nea Karvali, Neapoli Thessalonika, Nea Floita (From Both Sides of the Aegean 1922-1924, 2014). Other refugee districts arose all over the country and refugees were finally able to leave their tents in the refugee camps and settle down in a new home. For most, however, settling in Greece meant adapting to a harsh new lifestyle away from their homelands and previous comforts.

The refugees from Asia Minor brought traditions regarding social life, religion, weddings and dowries,

death rituals, food, and music. Though a much wider analysis of traditions was conducted by the Diadrasis project, a few notable and enduring traditions will be discussed.

5.1 SOCIAL LIFE

In Asia Minor hospitality for friends as well as strangers occupied a large part of socialization. Houses always had large uncomfortable wooden chairs with straight backs in abundance (at least three for each person in the family). During the warmer months, these chairs would be placed outside to provide an invitation for passersby to stay and chat. These gatherings were also important for women to socialize and gossip as well as to gather together and embroider lace and

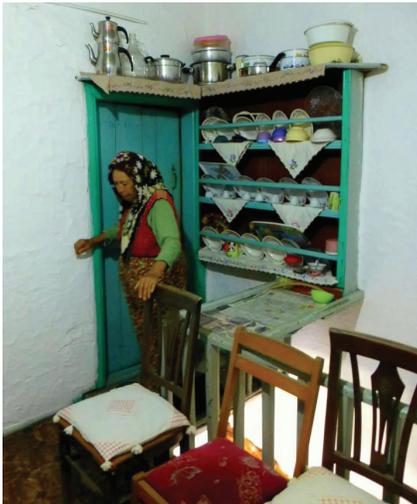


Fig. 10. Kitchen corner in one of the traditional houses of Şirince. Image by DIADRASIS.



Fig. 11. Refugees in front of Temple of Theseus, Athens 1922. Library of Congress Digital Archive, USA, 1922, Smyrna.



Fig. 12. Interview with a couple in Şirince. Image by DIADRASIS.

linens to pass the time. Men would sit more commonly in cafes playing games and drinking coffee over the latest political discussions. Never turning a stranger away, socialization of women outside homes, and the sociality of coffee drinking strongly continue today.

5.2 RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS

As Greek Orthodoxy still plays a strong role in uniting Greek refugee descendants to their Asia Minor past, many traditions are still practiced today. For example, Easter is the most essential holiday. During Easter, celebrations continue into the early hours and fasting is broken with lamb soup, red eggs, and bread. The Easter tradition and celebrations are still strongly celebrated and are most spectacular on smaller island communities, which are almost entirely made up of Greek Orthodox inhabitants during this time of the year.

On St. John's Day (June 23), large bonfires are lit in streets with newspapers and wood, and they stay burning until midnight with people leaping over the flames. Hirschon noted how she witnessed older people reminiscing about this old Asia Minor tradition (Hirschon, 1989: 202). As found in an interview with a refugee from Kirintzes, the koliva was also done in smaller rural communities. Born in 1910, Ms. Stamatio Karayianni told how no one was allowed out of the house during mourning while everyone in the community was expected to pay their respects. The koliva (koliva) of boiled wheat was prepared for the 3 month, 6 month, and 9 month gatherings after the death (Karayianni, 2002).

5.3 WEDDINGS AND DOWRIES

In Greek Orthodoxy tradition, marriage was everyone's destiny unless celibacy in a monastic community was chosen instead. Parents were responsible for marrying off their offspring, and therefore daughters needed dowries to prove their worth as wives. It was the duty of the woman to raise children and take care of her husband/house, while it was the man's duty to be the head of the household and create a family (most importantly to produce sons to take his name). In arranged marriages, there would be a pool of candidates with a *proxenitis* (go-between) to facilitate the match. The *proxenitis* was considered a highly-valued social position despite being unpaid, and was typically someone related to the family who enlarged the social network of different candidates and helped to make an analysis regarding the qualities of the prospective spouses including economic levels of families, place of origin, health, and virtue. Even in 1972, marriages were still being made within the refugee population. Girls who married without a dowry were seen as a failure and her parents could have no pride. The dowry consisted of a property transfer by the bride's parents, and was considered an important custom in the Hellenic world since ancient times. Upon marriage, girls were expected to provide a certain amount of wealth sometimes in the form of a house or moveable goods such as 'cash, gold coins, or household linen and equipment'. Often the bride embroidered goods herself. In later years, a house was necessary for the marriage, or at least private quarters with the bride's family home during the refugee years when housing and men were both hard to come by (Hirschon, 1989: 114).

In Turkey a very similar tradition is still practiced regarding the dowry tradition. 22 year old Özge Aydın,

a Turkish woman from Samsun, talked about how her mother has been making a dowry for her since she was born and still continues to add to it—something that is also still practiced (though not common) in the Greek culture. The Turkish dowry also includes the basic needs of marriage such as kitchen and bedroom attire. Regarding choosing a partner, based on the more modern standards of Istanbul, Özge says she is able to marry someone that she loves. However, on the east side of the country Özge says it is not so easy to choose a partner you wish because there are the *töre*—the Turkish customs, laws, and traditions much more enforced in the East. Therefore, girls cannot choose the men they want to marry in the East, but a father with a boy can come to a girl's home and the father will tell the girl's father that his son wishes to marry the daughter (personal communication, 12 May 2014). This is similar to Greek familial involvement in marriages, which still endures in some more traditional households today.

Unfortunately, most of the more traditional wedding customs celebrated in Asia Minor have not endured including the cooking of a goat in the center of the town to offer to guests as an invitation to a wedding, or having the bride come on decorated horseback and later remain behind a veil during the wedding's festivities.

5.4 DEATH RITUALS

In Greece, death rituals “provoked an awareness of common human experience” (Hirschon, 1989: 206), and the deaths of refugees were felt particularly strongly because the original refugees were those “whose memories had been the living source of communal identity and who had transmitted to their descendants a vital sense of their heritage” (Hirschon,

1989: 207). Upon a refugee's death, emotions were amplified with a “collective anxiety about their sense of identity and awareness of their bonds as ‘refugees’” (Hirschon, 1989: 207). The death of an original refugee represented the loss of a direct link with Asia Minor, something which is almost completely lost today. As discussed before, the welfare of a soul remained in the family's care. An oil lamp, the *kandili*, was used as metaphor for human life (the flame burns until the oil runs out). As death approached, the house wife put aside a bottle of wine and white winding cloth, and 33 coins were saved to put into coffin (representing Charos' boat ride to the other world in pre-Christian tradition). At the burial, everyone threw a handful of dirt on grave, and after they would go to a nearby coffee shop and the family paid for coffee, brandy, and a rusk for all attending (Hirschon, 1989: 206-215). The family then returned home for soup of consolation (fish soup), and during the next 40 days, women stayed home and kept the oil-map lit all day and night while a glass of water would be put outside so the soul could drink (Doumanis, 2013: 98). Three days after death, women washed clothes and prepared the meal for the dead. Nine days after death, men would organize the tombstone and grave slab. After 40 days, invitations were sent out for a larger memorial service. Again, everyone was invited to the coffee shop, and this time with *koliva*, consisting of raisins, sugared almonds, sesame seeds, toasted flour, pomegranate seeds with boiled wheat made into a mound, elaborately decorated and individually packed with various words of remembrance (θεός σκωρέει' τον/την) (Hirschon, 1989: 206-215).

Özge Aydın (Turkey) noted that her family follows the Islamic requirements for death, but they also make something called the *helva* on the same day the person dies and it is given to those who come to offer their condolences (personal communication,



Fig. 13. Restaurant in Şirince. Image by DIADRASIS.



Fig. 14. Traditional dancing. Image by Ephesus Centre.

12 May 2014). This tradition very much overlaps with the Greek koliva, especially because helva consists of similar ingredients including flour, oil, milk, and sugar.

5.5 FOOD AND MUSIC

As discussed earlier, music and dance in Asia Minor were a common celebratory tradition, and from a research study done by the Union of Mikrasiaton in Thebes (Thiva) as well as cultural events held at the Ephesus Centre in Athens (Πανελληνίας Ενωσης Εφεσίων), it is evident that the music, songs, and dances of folk tradition from the Greeks of Asia Minor still endure. Today there is a large revival of traditional dance, but sitting in a bar or any musical gathering in Greece shows the enduring dancing traditions. Musical instruments brought to Greece include the Lute (Λαούτο), Oudi (Ούτι), Lyre (λύρα), Kanonaki (Κανονάκι), and Zither (Σαντούρι). The four main dances that have endured include the Karsilamas (Καρσιλαμάς), the Aptalikos (Απτάλικος), the Hasapikos Politiko (Χασάπικος πολιτικός), and the Smirneikos Ballos (Σμυρναϊκός μπάλος). The Karsilamas displays women holding scarves with diagonal edges while bending their hands to their elbows and then moving their hands simultaneously left and right while rotating the scarf circularly in one direction until it is folded and unfolded in opposite movements. This dance in particular was used in wedding ceremonies and other festivities on the coast of Asia Minor, Thrace, and Lesbos, and was danced by a couple or several couples. The Aptalikos is a type of Karsilamas or Zeimpekiko as mentioned by Dimitria Kapsali. In this dance, one or two people face each other and dance within an imagined

circle moving flexibly forward with their shoulders, holding their hands at shoulder's height with elbows bent. This dance has no standard step and dancers are free to dance expressively and emotively. The Hasapikos Politiko was danced in Byzantium by the butchers, and included the very common and typical line dancing shoulder to shoulder intertwined. This is perhaps the most well known Greek and Turkish form of dancing. Lastly, the Smirneikos Ballos is an erotic form of dancing between a man and a woman dancing opposite of each other using flirting movements (Union of Mikrasiaton Thebes, 2014). Özge Aydin is a dancer in Istanbul (Turkey) and she is very familiar with the similarities in dancing and musical techniques (personal communication, 12 May 2014).

5.6 CONDITIONS OF MUSLIM REFUGEES

On the Turkish side, Muslim refugees arrived and experienced the same uneasy feeling of not belonging. For example, in the village called Muradiye near Izmir, only Rum (Greek Orthodox) had occupied it before the war. However, after the exchange, Muslim refugees were placed in the looted houses and they had no idea what to do with the olive groves previously efficiently worked by the Greek tenants. The Turkish government also provided no aid or monetary assistance to the refugees, and they were forced to make their own survival with their new homes just as on the Greek side (Köker and Keskiner, 2003: 194-200). Though evidence or testimonials regarding the conditions of the Muslim refugees from Greece is hard to find, fortunately our research team was able to travel to a small town of Şirince outside of Izmir

where Muslim refugee descendants still live, and we were able to talk to them and understand more about their experiences moving into communities that had been entirely dominated by Greeks. From the visit to modern Şirince by the director of Diadrasis, Laura Melpomeni Tapini, alongside the culture and education director of the Selçuk Efes Collective Memory Center, Filiz Ağbaba Gürsel, a collection of photographs and interviews were documented relating to the Greek houses still standing now occupied by Muslim refugee descendants from Greece. Figure 4 depicts the unchanged aesthetic of Şirince, once the entirely Greek-occupied Kirkintzes. This fieldwork gave an excellent view into the maintenance of century-old houses and the endurance of Greek tradition and architectural presence in Asia Minor.

Left with nothing and dispersed into unknown lands, the refugees of the Greek and Turkish war and population exchange faced years of hardship and prosecution for their refugee status. However, what they held onto were their traditions regarding religion, wedding celebrations, dancing, music, death, and many more traditions that they had practiced in their homes of the Ottoman Empire. These lasting traditions are the focus of this article's initiative. As millions of people brought with them the memories, daily routines, traditions regarding food, music, dance, etc. from the Ottoman Empire, we can slowly document and trace the common connection between Greek and Turkish populations.

6. YOUNGER GENERATION ENGAGEMENT AND POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Perhaps the most important component to ensure traditions are collected and preserved lies within the interest and engagement of younger generations. Traditions have slowly died away because younger

generations today do not want to live in two to three family prefabricated refugee housing anymore nor do they continue to learn Turkish, the language of their grandparents or great-grandparents. They want to continue going to school, to make a better life for themselves, and they want to look forward, not back. As Hirschon states, “[they] no longer share the experience of marginality and deprivation which marked the lives of their parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents in some families, nor do they hear the stories told of life in the homeland, as the original refugees pass away” (Hirschon, 1989: 76). However, a survey study sent via Facebook calling on younger generations to discuss their knowledge about the Greek and Turkish War and population exchange and their interest in learning about and preserving the traditions, an entirely unexpected outcome was reached.

The first few questions of the survey helped to place the person in target groups. Of the 100 responses we recorded, 45 were Greek while 55 were Turkish. Throughout the survey it became clear that younger generations are very knowledgeable about Greek and Turkish relations. Respondents were very engaged in writing further responses and comments about each question. The last section of the survey asked if respondents think Greece and Turkey share similar traditions including music, food, and dance, and whether these traditions should be recognized and protected. 95.5 percent of the respondents answered ‘yes’ while three people answered that they don’t think Greece and Turkey share traditions. Similarly, for the next question, 95 percent also answered they think these traditions should be recognized and protected while only two percent answered no. Of those who answered ‘yes’, 42 were Greek and 42 were Turkish. This overwhelmingly equal response is a strong indication that the younger generations of Greece and Turkey believe their cultures are very similar and



Fig. 15. Interview with a couple in Şirince. Image by DIADRASIS.



Fig. 16. Traditional dinner. Image by Katherine Burlingame.

that they would like to see these traditions illuminated and protected. It is also very interesting that an equal number of Greek and Turkish respondents answered 'yes', which gives no variable of either country's younger generation still clearly holding any negative feelings.

Therefore, this paper concludes with the proposal to reconsider the intangible heritage of these people and to help record and preserve as much as possible regarding the way of life in the Ottoman Empire in order to understand the shared common history between Greece and Turkey and how much can still

be done to mend the relationship broken due to political initiatives and the interference of western powers in the lives of once peacefully cohabitating and coexisting peoples. Similarly, as the younger generation clearly has expressed interest in learning more about how to identify and protect this heritage, there should certainly be a further awakening and revival of traditions and customs inherited from Asia Minor.

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Fig. 17. Children wearing traditional clothing. Image by Ephesus Centre.



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